

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN
AND OTHER POEMS

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE NEWTON

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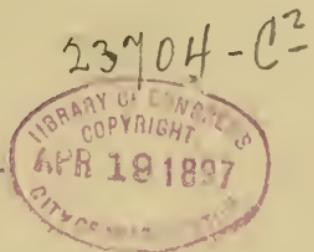


THE
VOICE OF ST. JOHN
AND OTHER POEMS

BY



WM. WILBERFORCE NEWTON
"PHILIP MACGREGOR," "PRIEST AND
MAN," ETC.



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SCENE:—St. John at Ephesus, on the last Easter-day of his life, gathers the members of the church together, by the riverside, and tells his converts once more, the story of the first Easter-day.

“Little children . . . it is the last time.”

1 JOHN ii. 18

P R E F A C E.

“ **J**N the convent of Drontheim
Alone in her chamber
Knelt Astrid the Abbess,
At midnight, adoring,
Beseeching, entreating
The Virgin and Mother.

“ She heard in the silence
The voice of one speaking
Without in the darkness,
In gusts of the night-wind,
Now louder, now nearer,
Now lost in the distance.

The voice of a stranger
It seemed as she listened,
Of some one who answered,
Beseeching, imploring,
A cry from afar off
She could not distinguish.

PREFACE.

“ The voice of Saint John,
The beloved disciple,
Who wandered and waited
The Master’s appearance,
A lone in the darkness,
Unsheltered and friendless.”

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

I.

GAITHER round me, little children, for my
days are ebbing fast,
And your aged friend and father goeth to his
home at last.

Soon the oldest of Apostles, white-haired, worn,
and craving rest,
Called by God, must join his brethren, saints and
martyrs, saved and blest.

Here, beside the swift Meander, where our holy
church has stood,
Saints of Ephesus, I bid you hold the faith and
seek the good.

On this happy Easter morning, you have sung
your hymns of praise,
And my soul is filled with memories of those far-
off, wondrous days,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

When we hurried in the morning, hope befogged
with clouds of gloom;
Hoping much, but fearing most—the silence of
the sullen tomb.

Little children! sure, I feel it—'tis the last time
my poor breath
Shall relate the Easter story—how our Lord has
conquered death.

Gather round me, then, and listen while I live the
past once more,
And recount the golden hours of that Easter-day
of yore.

II.

Gray and cold was the dawn, and darkness hung
long on the twilight,
When Mary, the loved one forgiven, from whom
had departed the devils,
Limping and halt as she was, for the demons had
troubled her sorely,
Tapped at the lattice-door of the house of my
mother, where Mary,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

The sister of Mary, the Virgin and wife of Clopas
were waiting.

These were the three who had stood by the blood-
dripping cross of the Saviour,

Theirs were the hands that received the body of
Jesus, when Joseph

Ascending the terrible cross, with Nicodemus, the
ruler,

Gently lowered the sheet, and folded the arms of
the victim.

Bearing the agonized mother away from the sight
of the crosses,

Giving my arm to the sufferer, pierced with the
sword of her sorrows,

Surely fulfilling the word which Simeon spake in
the temple,

Back from this vision of death, away from the
shouts of the soldiers,

Wearied and stricken and worn, I was sleeping the
sleep of the troubled,

Guarding the home of our loved one, of Mary, the
mother of Jesus,

Hard by the narrow street, that led up to the for-
tress of Herod.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Little knew I of the plan of my mother, that early
by daybreak
The women should go to the tomb, to wait for the
promised deliverance.
'Twas Salome, my mother, you know, Zebedee's
wife of Gennesaret,
Who came to the master of old, and asked for a
place in the kingdom,
For those who stood nearest her heart, as she gave
up her all to the Master,
Leaving her home in the north, and her husband,
the fisherman sailor;
'Twas Salome, my mother, I say, who prepared for
this early adventure,
First at the tomb in the garden, last upon Calva-
ry's hill-top.
Busy were they in the work of preparing the spike-
nard and ointment,
Hoping and fearing by turns and ready for joy or
for sorrow.
Thus in the dark of the morning, before the first
red of the sunrise,
Wrapping their mantles about them, their hurrying
feet sought the Garden.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

III.

But hark ! Was it thunder they heard
Rumbling in darkness so still ?
Stars in the sky seemed to fall,
Soldiers affrighted, dismayed,
Fled from the tomb, and like sheep
Struck by the fiery bolts
Of an eastern simoon in the sands
Of the desert, were fleeing away,
Trembling, the sisters advanced,
Where a luminous cloud seemed to rest
In the rocky recess of the tomb.
Then came the vision of light !
Angels were guarding the place !
The stone on the pathway was rolled,
The sepulchre empty and bright,
Gave the first note of that joy
Which to Easter must always belong,
Telling them Christ was alive !
Then in the triumph of bliss,
Quick in her womanly thought,
Mary, the Magdalene, fled,
Leaving her comrades behind,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

To feast on the fulness of faith
Changed to the richness of sight,
While the red sun in the heavens
Poured forth the splendors of day !
Never had sunrise till then
Meant such a flood of bright hopes ;
Never had light till this morn
Been such a message from God :
Never had darkness and fear
Lurking within the cold tomb
Been driven away, until now.

It was then I heard hurrying feet,
And the latch of the door opened wide,
At the home of the mother of Christ,
Where Simon had come from his tears,
Humbled and saddened and wan.
'Twas the Magdalene. Ere she could speak,
In her face that was lighted with joy,
The message of triumph I read,
As she clasped her pale hands and exclaimed :

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

IV.

The Master has surely arisen !
Come, visit the spot where He lay.
The keepers have fled, and an angel has said,
“ Christ is risen, is risen to-day.”

We have been to the tomb very early,
With ointment and spikenard, for fear
Our hopes should deceive us, but, brothers, be-
lieve us,
The angels have dried every tear.

It was dark when we came to the garden,
And we felt for the latch, as the gray
Seemed to lighten, our footsteps to brighten
And herald this wonderful day.

Yet, perchance it is only a vision,
Perchance I am dreaming or mad,
But they've taken away our dear Lord where He
lay,
Run quickly ! Behold, and be glad !

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

V.

Starting away like ships that feel the breeze on the
canvas,
Simon and I in the zeal which is born in the
moment of triumph ;
Ran through the city's street, till we came to the
gate of the Garden :
First at the tomb was I, while Peter came panting
behind me,
Weary and worn as he was, from the tears of his
bitter sorrow.
Alone we stood at the grave which was silent and
robbed of its inmate ;
No vision to us was vouchsafed, and the women
had gone to the city.
The guard from the fortress had fled, to carry the
story to Pilate.
“Where were the angels,” we asked, “and how
should we know what the truth was ? ”
For the sun was climbing the heavens and mystery
still was our portion.
’Twas then in our utter amaze, that the Magdalene
following behind us,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Came to the open tomb, and taking her resolute
station,
Said she would watch o'er the grave till she saw a
new vision of angels :
Firm in her faith was she, that Jesus was surely
arisen,
And trusting her future to God, she uttered this
song, in her rapture :

VI.

I shall behold His face
And triumph in His love,
I yet shall see His love for me,
God's loving care above.

I may not see His ways,
Or know His secret plan,
Yet I can wait His kingly state
And feel His love for man.

I can not scan God's will.
I linger here in faith.
Yet I shall see His love to me.
I'll trust Him unto death.

THE VOICE OF ST JOHN.

I shall behold His face,
His loving form shall see.
It must be nigh ; I can but sigh,
Bring me, my Lord, to Thee !

VII.

It was then when we had departed, and wended
our way to the city,
Seeking the other apostles, to tell them these won-
derful rumors,
That Mary, alone in the Garden, beholding a form
drawing near her,
Said to the vineyard's watch (supposing the gar-
dener was coming),
“ If thou hast borne Him hence, oh, tell me where
thou hast laid Him,
And I will take Him away, if death is the end of
my vision.
But if He is risen indeed—” Then beholding the
face of the stranger,
To the earth, as one dead, she fell; while Jesus
said to her—“ MARY ! ”

VIII.

“ Rabboni, my Master,” she cried,
“ Thy feet, O my God, let me clasp !
Am I treading the pavement above
Where freedom is given from doubt ?
Am I lifted to light that is bliss ?
Has heaven come down upon earth
Since Christ over death has the power ? ”
Then Jesus to Mary replied ;
Her face in her mantle shut in,
As though she were blinded with light
“ Touch me not yet, O my child,
Not yet to my Father in heaven
Bearing the sheaves from the field,
Bringing the first-fruits of life,
Have I in triumph gone up.
But go to my brethren and say,
Back to our Father and God
Soon I ascend ; that in joy
In the kingdom that lieth beyond,
We for all ages may be
Brethren, united in life,
Never by sorrow undone ! ”

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

IX.

Gone in a moment was Christ, and the whispering
breath of the west wind
Fanned the penitent's face on the spot where her
Lord had been standing :
Leaving the Garden again, she encountered Salome
and Mary
Just by the brook, in the way that leads up to the
fish-pond of Herod :
Warm was their loving embrace while the Magda-
lene sang in her gladness :

X.

Hail to the brightness which heralds His glory !
Hail to the coming of Christ among men !
Back from the tomb He has come, and the story
Is told us by angels again and again !

Death is uncrowned, since the Saviour of mortals
The grave and destruction has robbed of their
gloom :
Victory shines out from heaven's opened portals,
Jesus has conquered the power of the tomb.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Christ is arisen ! O sisters, with gladness,
Bright shines this Easter morn, bringing Him
near,
Lovingly owning Him, banishing sadness,
Hope springs eternal o'er darkness and fear.

XI.

It was then in the court of the temple, the priests
and the rulers were plotting,
How they might silence the tale brought back by
the terrified soldiers :
“They have stolen His body away ; say this to
the wondering people.”
Such was the word of the rulers, such was their
meaning of Easter.

Easter noon was it now, when a party of loving
disciples,
Women, with spices prepared, to lay at the tomb
of the prophet,
From Galilee came, and inquired the way to the
garden of Joseph.
Thus they drew near to the cavern, so fern-crowned
and buried in mosses,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Peering within at the place where they thought
they should see the Lord's body.
While they were earnestly gazing, amazed to find
nothing but grave-clothes,
A luminous flame seemed to shine, and lo, the
bright forms of two angels
Told them that Christ was alive, as they chanted
this song in sweet music :

XII.

Awake ! Awake ! Glad voices make.
Sing praise to Christ the Lord,
The living Word,
In earth and heaven
Eternally adored !
For thankful songs
From hearts and tongues
To Christ our King is given
From hearts of men
Set free again
And happy saints in heaven.

"Tis Easter morn, new faith is born,
The day of days the best.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Sing praise to God !
Sing out abroad,
With joy and hope possessed !
For now the Prince
Of Peace hath fought,
And triumphed o'er the grave,
With holy arm,
And strong right hand,
Omnipotent to save.

No shadows now, our spirits bow
Our souls are raised on high,
The Son of man
In God's own plan
Has come to earth to die.
No doubts or fear
Could hold Him here
Detained by mortal breath.
For now He lives
And freely gives
Redemption over death !

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

XIII.

Frightened, and awe-struck, and still, the women
from Galilee pondered
What this strange vision should mean, ere it faded
away into sunlight.
Soon to their wondering souls there was joined the
glad spirit of Mary,
Who back from the vineyard returned when Jesus
had vanished before her.
“Come, let us seek the disciples, come, let us tell
the glad tidings.”
Cheerfully thus to the group the Magdalene spoke,
and then added :
“Out of a garden man wandered, sin entering in
by a woman :
Back to an Eden restored let woman recover the
doubting.”
Leading the way to the city, the strangers from
Galilee followed,
Close on the steps of their guide, as she knocked
at the door-post of Simon—
Simon the zealot, I mean, where, sitting within in
the darkness,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

The scattered disciples were found engaged with
these obstinate rumors.

Gladly their story they told, but how could the
brethren believe them ?

How could it ever be true as Thomas exclaimed
'mid these doubtings :

XIV.

Now is done our work of faith,
Can it be that Christ o'er death
Triumphs with His human breath ?

Let them freely say
What they hope or what they fear !
Binding law both far and near
Rules supreme o'er grief and cheer,
Night is never day !

When the human body dies,
When the soul from matter flies,
When the form beloved, lies
In the silent tomb,
Who can call us back once more,
From the strange, mysterious shore,
Where the gathered souls of yore
Live beyond earth's gloom ?

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Nay, my brethren, do not grieve.
I can ne'er this tale believe.
Reason can not this receive,
 Can not understand !
In the Master's piercèd side,
Where the spear-thrust entered wide,
In those palms once crucified,
 I must thrust my hand !

XV.

Shades of the evening grew on, while forth to a
neighboring village,
Two of our company went, to seek for the absent
 Salome,
And as in their talk by the way they communed
 with each other and wondered,
A pilgrim they passed on the road, a wayfarer,
mantled and hooded,
Who, joining their steps toward the town, thus
spoke with a tone of emotion :

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

XVI.

“ Wherefore this saddened gaze,
And why this gloom when all around is bright ?
Walks trouble a companion with you on life’s ways,
Silent and dark as night ? ”

Then Clopas quick replied,
“ Art thou a stranger in Jerusalem,
And know’st thou not that Jesus Christ hath died ?
Would’st thou our grief condemn

“ When we had trusted all
Our hidden hopes to this, the Son of man,
The last of all the prophets ; and the pall
Grows thick o’er every plan ? ”

“ And certain women brave,
Have thrilled our spirits by the news they bring
From Joseph’s garden, for they say the grave
Contains not anything — ”

“ And angels guard the place.
Moreover, ’tis the third day, and we know

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

He whom we trusted, told us face to face,
Our faith to sight would grow.

“And yet we see Him not,
And fears come in and rob our rising breath.
On earth there does not seem one favored spot
Untenanted by death.”

Then the wayfarer said :
“O fools and slow of heart to take in hand
All that the prophets and the seers of old
Have told you : understand

The purpose of the Lord.”
And then, with earnest look and kindling eye,
The stranger, from the visions of God’s Word,
Showed them why Christ must die !

Then on the shady road
Which skirts the entrance to Emmaus’ slope,
Reaching, by sunset’s hour, their plain abode,
Aroused with kindling hope,

They pressed their guest to stay.
“Abide with us, for it is drawing late,
And shadows fall,” they said, “across the way :
Pass not our humble gate.”

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

'Twas eve; and yet 'twas dawn !
Quick as a flash while we were breaking bread
We saw the living face we thought was dead,
And Christ was gone !

XVII.

'Twas night and the city was still. The paschal
 moon had arisen,
Silvering the turrets and walls of the castles and
 fortresses grim,
Light on the temple shone and the shadows were
 growing tall ;
In the evening watch could be heard the clatter
 of horses' hoofs,
As down the pavement of stones some lordly Sen-
 ator, late
To the feast of his Roman friends, in his lumbering
 chariot was driven.
The cry of the owl so shrill, as he perched in the
 cedars old,
Or the call of some vender of wares, lost in the
 driver's noise,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

As he hurried his mules along, broke in on the stillness of night.

"Twas then in a secret room the eleven disciples were found,

With others to whom the reports had been brought from the empty grave,

While wonder and doubt like the tide ruled their spirits by turns.

Into this upper room suddenly entered the brothers

Who from Emmaus had come, crowning their hopes with the tidings:

"Jesus is risen indeed! Simon hath seen Him alive!"

"Twas then, while with rapture we stood, scanning the faces of friends,

To find that assurance of hope, hidden away in our breasts,

Right in the midst of the group, ere we could know what it meant,

Jesus with glory appeared: Jesus, the same and yet changed,

Changed, yet our Jesus of old, breathing out blessings on each,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

"Peace to your spirits," He said. . . . Why need
I tell you the rest?

'Tis the food and the drink of the soul! Soon I
shall see Him again;

Soon on His bosom recline, as once at the passover
feast

To me it was given to feel the heart-beats of Him
who has gone!

XVIII.

Thus I've told again the story
Of the Resurrection morn,
How, from out the clouds of darkness,
Hope for man from God was born.

Hold this faith, then, do not falter,
Bear the trials of your life,
Peace comes after struggle; after
Death, there comes eternal life.

Little children, keep from idols;
Heed my faltering words to-day.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

This is God, the only true One.
This is life, the only way.

God is true, and all things show it.
Let your lives your trueness prove:
Can you doubt on Easter morning,
God is light and God is love?

TOLD AMONG THE HILLS.

HELP FROM THE HILLS.

“I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS FROM
WHENCE COMETH MY HELP !”

UP to the Hills of God’s eternal keeping,
Which round us rise with ever wooded
domes,

Our spirits struggle: from our mountain homes
We gather in the vintage and the reaping
Of inward quiet in the troubled soul,
Of peace and rest, and freedom from the toil
Of feverish warfare 'mid the endless roll
Of crowded cities built on barren soil.

Here midst these hoary hills a calm descends
On simple living. Each new opening scene
Brings work and rest, while nature gently blends
The winter’s storm with summer skies serene,
And all the consecrated household joys
We gather in as children do their toys.

From Greylock’s summit to the burnished sheen
Which gilds Onota’s placid bosom fair,
How many a path, like an enchanted stair,
Leads to the heart of Nature: like a queen

HELP FROM THE HILLS.

Hidden in trackless maze her spirit dwells
And throbs though leafy grove and silent glen.

A conscious joy and sense of presence wells
Eternally amid these shades, and when

The tired truant seeks the mother's arms,
Worn with the grimy dust of stubborn strife,

At every turn in wood and dell, the charms
Of Thy restoring self, Thou Fount of Life,

The wayward nature feeleth, and it thrills

The yielding soul with strength from out these
Hills.

At times the parable is manifest; with open page
We read the lesson found within our reach.

It is not difficult to learn or teach ;

And while men wonder, while the heathen rage,

We see the pictured truth lie close at hand ;

Help cometh from the Hills. This much is
clear ;

This much at least 'tis ours to understand ;

And he who wills to win must never fear

Above himself to live ; his eager heart

Must heed those primal voices manifold

Which upward call him ; if the better part

Of life he chooses, let his spirit bold

HELP FROM THE HILLS.

Dare to chain down the self-asserting brute
Which hides in man and makes his music mute.

O life ! O time ! O struggling soul of man,
Life, time, are in thy hands ; dare to be brave,
Dare to be godlike, and divinely crave
That which is God's in God's own chosen plan,
Whereby, among the saved hereafter, thou,
With willing feet and soul forever free
From stain or sin, among the saints may bow
In grateful praise to Him who fashioned thee
In His own likeness. Neither stock nor stone,
Nor force nor power in nature, can outlast
The spark of God within thee. Round yon
throne
His children stand ; and when the archangel's
blast
Shall rend the face of nature with decay,
Thou shalt live on in ever opening day !

MEMORIAL DAY—THE MEANING OF THE SOLDIER'S MONUMENT.

"That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, what MEAN ye by these stones ?

"Then ye shall answer them ; these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever !"—JOSHUA iv. 6-7.

I.

STILL his place our soldier keeps,
Still the wife, the mother, weeps ;

Still our hands the garlands bring,
Still with captive harps we sing.

To the city of the dead,
Still our willing feet are led.

Time, the test of Love and Truth,
Ever guards the heart of Youth.

Tell us true, O Sentinel,
Canst thou answer, "All is well ?"

Here midst nature's smile and frown,
Thou dost guard our favored town.

MEANING OF THE SOLDIER'S MONUMENT.

Towards the west thy face is turned,
Speak—the lesson thou hast learned !

Past thy pedestal the throng
Daily move their way along,

Image of our buried dead—
Thou dost halt where they have led.

Tell us true, O Sentinel,
Is thy answer, “ All is well ? ”

II.

Follow the dead. 'Tis better far to die
With faith and courage than to live for greed.
'Tis life, not stolen hours, which counts on high,
'Tis life to follow where God's voice doth lead.

Follow the dead. There is no joy like faith,
No cheer like action—no true hope like this,
Follow the dead. The gates of life through death,
Have opened on the fields of heavenly bliss.

Follow the dead. The motives of their life
Shall give them precedence in realms of day ;

MEANING OF THE SOLDIER'S MONUMENT.

Firm with a purpose, out of earthly strife
Their souls are journeying on their heavenward
way.

Enter the path. God's loving hand
Leads all His sons. He gives them of His power
Whene'er He calls them. Nothing can withstand
The strength which holds them in the dying hour.

Forget thyself! The worldling's hoarded gains
Lead to destruction. Gird thyself, be strong ;
Endure, believe, strive on, these human pains
Shall issue in the Seraph's burst of song !

Only believe. Believe through doubt and fear ;
Heed thy soul's instincts. Hear the voices call
Thy erring soul. Behold life's vision here
And yield to God, He will not let thee fall.

Choose your reward ! The creature's joy is thine,
If for mere gain you yield your fluttering heart ;
Choose your reward ! A joy and power divine
Are his who chooseth well the better part !

Comrades, farewell ! Your work on earth is done ;
Rest in the holy calm of God on high ;
Ye in the path of life the palm have won,
And ye shall live since ye have dared to die !

POLLICE VERSO.

[Read at the Reunion of the Class of '65, University of Pennsylvania.]

[In the gladiatorial contests in the Coliseum at Rome, it was the custom for the successful combatant before killing his vanquished foe to allow him to appeal for mercy to the vast populace. If the spectators desired the vanquished to live, they showed their mercy by presenting upturned thumbs; if they desired him to be killed, they signified their wish by reversed or downward turned thumbs, as is shown in Gerome's famous picture. Hence the expression "Pollice Verso" or "Thumbs reversed" came to have the meaning of "Complete the conquest!" or "Finish the fight!"]

I.

WITHIN the Coliseum's walls,
With strained and wearied eyes,
A motley crowd from Roman halls
Shout as the vanquished dies.

Upon his couch with languid look,
The empurpled Cæsar lay—
Scarce conscious as his ease he took,
Of evening's lengthening ray.

POLICE VERSO.

With hollow eyes and haggard mien,
The Roman matrons stood,
With gaze intent upon the scene
Of strife, and pain, and blood.

On that hard-matted, brutal floor,
The dying swordsman lay ;
In vain, their mercy to implore,
His beckoning hand made way.

The noise and din—the shouts of strife,
The groans of dying men ;
Passed like the light and clouds of life
Athwart some caverned glen.

With foot upon his foeman's breast,
The lucky winner stands ;
Awaiting the supreme behest
Of countless down-turned hands.

“ Police Verso ! ” is the cry,
O'er the arena heard,
The signal that the vanquished die ! —
He dies—without a word !

POLLICE VERSO.

II.

If life is strife till life be past
For souls who own a Father's hand,
How well that we should rest at last,
If life is strife.

We struggle on from morn till noon
And wonder when our feet shall stand
In regions bright with holier life.

When the last blow on self is cast,
When the last sword-thrust, whose command
Has ruled our latest will is past—
Then ends the strife.

III.

Pleasure and Profit can give no peace.
They whisper in silence, “Cease, oh, cease
This long-drawn strife—Lo, the scars increase !”

Howe'er it be, that we feel the night,
Growing dark o'er a field where once there was
light,
Let us heed this motto—“Finish the fight.”

POLICE VERSO.

Oh ! ye who have struggled and won at last,
Bind now your forms to the upright mast
Like Ulysses of old, till the sirens are past.

Oh, children of yesterday—men of to-day !
There are heads which were black, that now are
gray,
Lines on our faces which seem to say—

“ This struggle for life—is it worth it all ?
This fight for God—it is growing small ;
This sense of Right—shall it go to the wall ? ”

But Duty, the daughter of Faith and of God,
Shows to us each that thorny road
Leading to Peace—which the Master trod.

Brothers and men, let us read aright
All that this symbol speaks in light,
Let us heed the signal and “ Finish the fight ! ”

Not pleasure alone with her empty smile,
Crafty and coy, and surcharged with guile
Can serve the nature God leads the while.

When pleasure in manhood rears his head ;
As we stand with the living and bury the dead,
Let this motto of old once more be said :

POLICE VERSO.

“Police Verso,” finish the fight,
Complete the conquest—ere it be night,
Die with the armor on—Die in your might.

When the bait of reward, or the greed of gain
Leaves on the virgin soul a stain,
Listen once more to this old refrain :

“Police Verso”—round out thy life—
Carry the standard into the strife,
For better for worse, as with man and wife.

There is joy in service, redeeming its pain,
There is health and hope and truest gain
When the nature its highest doth attain.

IV.

We know not what that life shall be,
What regions yet unknown are there,
What knowledge we shall one day see—
What glory bear!

But into life so sure, so free—
Beyond the beating of the sea,
The soul its armor-chain must wear

POLICE VERSO.

The symbol of our strife; when we
Rise high above our mood's despair,
And we shall gain the victory—
In upper air.

V.

Oh! sons of men! my lay forgive
If pitched too high it seem—
The rest of life we each must live,
We cannot play or dream.

Our past is gone for good or ill,
Our present yet remains;
The future lies within the will
Of him who reaps his gains.

Gone be the lower springs of life,
Gone be the cringing bow
Of mind to things, Oh, end the strife!
Complete the conquest now!

“Police Verso” be our cry!
Press down the hand till death!
Better to struggle and to die,
Than draw the craven's breath!

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

THIS is Francesco's tomb ; the flowers you see
Are brought each day by loving hands un-
known
And placed upon this rocky sepulchre.
'Tis twenty years since Old Francesco died.
It seems but yesterday. The people here
Can ne'er forget him. Every house had some
One dead, like Egypt's plague, and, whether shriven
Or dead in sins, the soul departed, dear
To father, mother, wife or husband's heart,
Was covered by the breath of holy prayer.
" 'Tis all poor man can do," Francesco said ;
" Come, let us follow dying ones with prayer."

How do we know
But the mercy of Heaven
Reaches to souls
Whom we call unforgiven ?
Who can forbid us
To follow our dead
With a prayer to our Father
That the lost may be led ?

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

Who shall forbid us
Humanity's part?
Who shall restrain
The bold leap of the heart,
As we pray for our loved ones,
Ask the Father to keep,
In His mercy, the feet
Of His lost, wand'ring sheep?

Such was his daily prayer. Amid yon grove
That skirts the vine-dressed hill, the Cluny monks
Oft gathered, as the sun went down ; and there
Brother Francesco prayed, with hope inspired,
For all the dead. Great faith in prayer had he.
But I must tell you why we keep the day
For All Souls. This Francesco, man of God,
Went as a pilgrim to the Holy Land.
The tomb of Christ he visited, and paid
To the Most High his vows. Returning thence,
He fain betook him to Mount Etna's side ;
For in a cavern, it was said, what time
The mountain thundered and poured out its fire,
The cursings and the cries of all the damned
"T was possible for men of faith to hear,—
God's recompense for all their trust in Him.

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

Here, at the mouth of Hell, Francesco paused,
Impatient for the slumbering fires to give
The sign when spirits doomed might groan their
hate

And rage against the sovereign laws of God.
For in the belching flames and throes which shook
The sturdy island's base and mountain side,
The cries of all the damned were lost in wild
Confusion. Here Francesco waited. Oft
In the hot noon, or when the moonbeams shed
Their peaceful influence on that rocky mount,
The holy brother, 'mid the jeers and cries
Of peasants smeared with grape-juice, at their toil
Amid the vines, the sport of children and
Of all the wagging crowd, yet undisturbed
Pursued his purpose, faltering not. Him in
The cleft, at midnight prayer, the whirlwind found,
The lava spoke in myriad hissing tongues,
The mountain trembled, and the flames shot forth
Like curling vipers on the stony crest
Of fiery Etna. Sheltered, unappalled,
Francesco, in the stormy war of all
The elements, heard whisperings—*Devils lost,*
Cursing the Cluny monks. Their prayers, they said,
Snatched many a soul from Fate and lowest Hell.

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

E'en God Himself, they muttered, yielded to
Such rescuing faith. Then listening undismayed,
The father heard them chant this impious song,
In their wild wrath :

Curse these men of Faith !
Faith does more than gold.
Curse their holy breath,
Winning souls untold !

Thunder in the air
Clears the murky sky.
Breath of living prayer
Brings the Father nigh !

When the world was ours,
When the world was dead,
Faith awoke new powers,
Faith new light has shed !

Curse these men of Faith !
Prayer is not in vain !
Men of Faith can dare
Save lost worlds again !

Curse these men of Faith !
Faith does more than gold,

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

Conquers Hell and Death,
Never waxes cold !

—More there is not to tell ;
Methinks the rest is known to all the world.
Odilo, Abbot of this place, has kept
The day forever sacred when the monk
Within the cavern heard the devils rave,
And called it then "*The Feast of all the Souls.*"
Then the Pope blessed the day. The rest you
know.

REASSURANCE.

"And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—*1 JOHN v. 4.*

Is there a victory then
Over our doubts and our fears ?
Is there a passage for men
Out of this valley of tears ?
For men who are weary and worn,
Broken, desponding, and sad ?
Is there Christ's smile for earth's scorn,
Making the sorrowful glad ?

Is there a joy for our trust,
A hope and assurance of peace ?
Is there a time when our doubts
And temptations forever shall cease ?
Is there a morning of light ?
A Sabbath of quiet and rest ?
When the end of the journey is reached,
And the crown of rejoicing possessed ?

REASSURANCE.

Yes! For at last we shall find
The Way, and the Truth, and the Life,
In our Lord, as the end of our search,
In Christ, as the goal of the strife.
Doubt, and temptation, and sin,
And the struggles we wage while we roam;
Will be hushed, in the past, and life's din
Be forgotten when resting at home.

So there's a victory then
Over our doubts and our fears;
Faith shall forever give way
To the knowledge which cometh with years
A knowledge of hope changed to sight,
Of trust to fruition made plain;
A life where the will and the power
To love as Christ loveth shall reign.

THE MIRAGE.

"IT DOETH NOT YET APPEAR WHAT WE SHALL BE."

"Splendor! Immensity! Rapture! Grand words, great things: a little definite happiness would be more to the purpose."—MADAME DE GASPARIN.

IN the mood of suspense I ask, can it be true,
All this faith which we cling to and trust in
With courage and joy? Shall I tremblingly rue
In the future unknown, this strong certainty
Steadying my hopes here on earth? For I am so
small,

In the sweep of God's planets; so tired and lone,
In the rush of the torrents of souls! Amid all
That I know not, nor care for, nor trust in, shall I,
Still myself as I am, press in at the door
That moves open at death and admits me to
Splendor, immensity, rapture,—and more
Than my mind can conceive of? But shall this
Be I, this new, wonderful creature? Methinks I
had rather

THE MIRAGE.

Be less of the marvel, effulgent in rainbows of bliss,
And more of the man, who in heaven could gather
His human ones round Him and live without sin,
as He was!

For how can I love these great powers and angels,
And all the unloved ones who surge out and in
From the worlds that I never have dreamed of?
O God, is it thus? Shall I lose myself there
In the soul-dust of lives which are numberless,
depths

Which I never can enter? My Father, Oh! where
Shall I rest myself, wearied and staggered
With all this sublimity? O God, is there not by
Thy throne, in which center the lines of
Creation's far-reaching expanse, the form and the
eye

Of the human one, tinging eternity's colorless blank
With the blood drops of time, and making in space
Unsubstantial and airy with cloud-fleece, a firm
And unchanging reality, where I can place
My poor wandering feet close by His feet! Yea,
my God,

I shall see Thee through Christ! I shall cling to
that Hand

THE MIRAGE.

Which was pierced for my sins, and though awed
By the shining of infinite light, still my soul
Shall be knit to the human in Jesus! I shall stand
Where the sinning men saved stand: the roll
Of the worlds ever moving around me: the flight
Of the thronging attendants of spirits, the life of
Eternity dreaded, unknown, shall awake to my
sight,
As the feverish dreams turn to joy when the sufferer turns to the light.

AMONG THE HILLS.

“ OME to me, oh my child,” my mother saith,

As resting in the spear-grass of the bluff,
I seek new comfortings, and with her breath
Fanning my cheek, feel this is joy enough.

“ Come to me from the toil, the care, the strife;
Come from the false faith to the ever true;
Look not behind thee at thy empty life,—
Come seek thy mother’s blessing ever new.

“ Wherefore this haste and toil, this carking care,
Why all this restless hurry, fret and pain ?
The grave awaits thy quickened speed, and where,
So well as here, canst thou thy soul regain ?

“ Forget, my child, the standards of the hour ;
Forget the paltry hoards and gains of men ;
Lay down the rod of fickle Fashion’s power,
Come to thy mother’s arms, my child, again ! ”

AMONG THE HILLS.

“ Yes, mother dear, thy truant turns to thee,
To thee comes back the prodigal of yore ;
Fooled, snared and blinded I thy face would see—
Would be the mother’s innocent once more.

“ Calm me, O Spirit of the Meadow’s God !
Breathe through my soul the peace that comes
to thee,
Fold me within thine arms, and let the sod,
The sky, the mountains, give their calm to me.”

THE MESSAGE OF THE PULPIT.

“I have a message from God unto thee.”—JUDGES iv. 20.

GOD has a word for thee,
My child, whose grasp on God is strong and sure,
Keep thou thy childhood spotless, fresh and pure!
This is God’s word for thee.

God has a word for thee,
My boy, just entering on the joys of youth,
Be not deceived—there is no guide like Truth!
This is God’s word for thee.

God has a word for thee,
My brother man, in the hot field of strife,
Lay hold, not on existence, but on life!
This is God’s word for thee.

God has a word for thee,
My sister, queen o’er many a fluttering heart,
Gifts perish, graces wither—choose that part
That shall not fall from thee.

THE MESSAGE OF THE PULPIT.

God has a word for thee,
My father, standing at the gates of Death,
Be not afraid—Heaven's own immortal breath
Is waiting there for thee.

God has a word for thee,
O happy soul! exultant as the lark,
Rejoice! Rejoice! but midst thy pleasures—Hark!
When God would speak to thee.

God has a word for thee,
O mourning soul, torn by thy sorrow sore,
A day will come when thou shalt mourn no more,
This is God's word for thee.

God has a word for thee,
Thou fallen world, on God's own pivots hung,
Thou fallen world, out on God's confines flung,
This is God's word for thee—

God speaketh to His world,
God dwells with man, in man's own fallen home ;
God wills it that we shall no longer roam
Out from His presence hurled.

THE MESSAGE OF THE PULPIT.

This is God's word to man.

The Son of God is here, Oh, be not dumb !

The Spirit and the Bride are calling, "Come!"

God dwelleth now with man.

THE IDLE HARP.

“As for our harps, we hanged them upon the willows.”

I HAVE no time for Thee,
Harp of my bright and lithesome boyhood’s ways,
Care, work and duty now consume my days,
I have no time for Thee !

I have no need of Thee :
A captive in the chains of daily toil—
Song comes not as the fruit of hard-reaped soil—
I have no need of Thee !

I have no soul for Thee :
Hang Thou upon the willow’s bending arm ;
A silent harp can do the world no harm,
I have no soul for Thee !

I have no skill for Thee :
The captive bird can never raise the songs
Of joy which to his freedom’s hour belongs,
I have no skill for Thee !

THE IDLE HARP.

I have no place for Thee :
The minstrel's note sounds harsh o'er fields of
strife :
'Tis work and toil, not song, which makes our life:
I have no place for Thee !

But I may come to Thee,
Thou Idle Harp, neglected and unstrung ;
Thou Idle Harp, upon the willows hung,
Perchance I'll come to Thee,

And Thou shalt speak again,
Thy notes forgotten, and Thy chords once more
Shall soothe my spirit as in days of yore,
Yes, Thou shalt speak again !

Rest till the coming morn !
As spoke great Memnon's statue when the breath
Awoke its strains, so from Thy seeming death
New voices shall be born !

WON AND WIDOWED.

[IN a village in Switzerland, a young guide on his way back from his wedding, met a party of tourists who were looking for a guide to explore a glacier. The young bridegroom left his bride at the chal t door as they returned from the church, and went as he was in his gay, peasant wedding clothes, the bride promising to keep a light in his window until he should return.

The guide fell through a ravine, upon a glacier bed, and was lost.

The widowed wife true to her vows, having learned that in the course of fifty years, the glacier would emerge from the ravine, waited all these years, and after watching at the mouth of the ravine, at last discovered her lost husband frozen in the ice, fifty years after his wedding-day. She, an old woman, looked once again on the marble face of her youthful husband, and conducted his body to the village church, where the funeral service was held, fifty years after the wedding-day].

SAID Margaret: "At last he is mine,
Cold on his glacier-bed—
My husband has come to these arms,
My Ernest has come to the light,

WON AND WIDOWED.

Out from the robber ravine
Which snatched my darling away,
While I in this death-watch of **years**,
The flickering taper have burned
In the chalêt window each night,
Waiting in vain for a step
Never again to be heard,
Looking in vain for a face
Never again to be seen,
Until now. Oh! the strife of these **years**
He so young and so fair—
Clad in his gay Tyrolese;
Silent and cold on his bed—
I so haggard and old—
Wrecked, and thwarted, and cursed
In the throw of my chance for life,
Maddened and torn from my love,
Ere the breath of his kiss was cold,
As he touched my trembling lips
At the chancel-rail—while the priest,
Hid by the incense smoke,
Knelt at the altar step,
Have met—at the jaws of this **cave**,
Spanning a widowed life—
Hiding a buried love!

WON AND WIDOWED.

“One more kiss on that marble face,
One look more at the darling boy,
He is mine; rob me not of my right :
For this moment my heart has beat on
The goal of my living—is this.
While others have hated, and loved,
Have squandered, and striven, and toiled,
Have begotten, have buried, have wed,
Noiselessly I have lived on—
With the slowness of Fate I have moved,
Towards this day, while the glacier-bed
Has slowly moved onward to me !

“Oh ! loved soul, in what world
Are hidden the thoughts of thy love,
Those heart-throbs pent-up for thy wife
Widowed and weary for thee ?
By what stream, by what meadow of bliss
Shall our love, rudely rent by the storm,
The snowdrift has piled in our path,
Be woven to oneness again—
Be made to the pattern of yore ?

•

“Lead on, up the rugged defile,
Towards the church on the grassy slope,

WON AND WIDOWED.

Where man and wife we came down,
When the call for a guide he heard.
Gray-haired matron, alone
Following the love of her youth,
Mourner and dead we return !
'Tis but yesterday seen in my dreams,
'Tis eternity lived by a child,
Orphaned, and stricken, and sad,
Ready to die any hour—
But waiting to see once again
The face of my lover of old,
To whom my young soul had been given !'

THE SPHYNX.

 H, Time ! How strange thou art !
 Thou hoary-headed king, with ages gray
 How thou dost trifle with each hopeful heart
 In wanton play !

Oh, thou imperious lord ;
 Thy sway is boundless, and thy stern com-
 mand :
 Each gordian knot is cut as with a sword
 From thy great hand !

The cradle and the tomb
 By thee are joined in life—a year, a day ;
 'Tis when the flowers of earth are in their bloom
 That they decay.

Speak, wintry Time :—Oh ! why
 Should life be chained by iron links to death ;
 Why should the new-born child begin to die
 With his first breath ?

THE SPHYNX.

The pyramids declare

The truth that life is short, and art is long ;

Where are the hands that reared them, where, oh
where

That countless throng ?

High o'er the buried dead,

Like mountain walls that echo with the strife ;
We hear the solemn, never-ending tread
Of death and life !

The Roman hero's arch,

The ruined domes and columns, so sublime,
Point, like the fabled causeway, to the march
Of giant Time !

Oh ! what a mockery this !

There was an Eden once, but at the gate
Despair stood waiting side by side with bliss ;
And still they wait !

Tell me, ye sentinels—why

Must man with his proud hopes be crushed for
ever ?

Why from unfinished matter do ye try

The mind to sever ?

THE SPHYNX.

• • • • •
The answer comes not now :
The silent stars above—the eddying sand,
Move round some law—to which all creatures bow
And nature shows her hand—

Remorseless, ruling all,
A Sphynx upon her lasting granite throne :
Yet voices speak within—and spirits call
Souls whom the spirits own.

THE ISLAND LIFE.

“ He that keepeth thee will not slumber.”

QN island in the sea of space,
We walk upon the shifting shore;
We hear the ocean’s ceaseless roar,
And see its waves our steps deface.

We hurry on—we soon are gone;
We scan the undiscovered main—
That ocean all unknown—in vain,
While still the tide is hurrying on !

We are but in our school-days here,
With faculties all dwarfed and blunted,
Our highest growth of reason stunted,
When midway in its proud career.

A half a century is man’s,
A thousand years is Nature’s time;
Which in this strange, uneven clime
Is needed to complete their plans !

THE ISLAND LIFE.

But when immortal we shall rise,
To study from the Master's hand,
And with the angels understand
 What now is hidden from our eyes—

'Twill be an ever-growing bliss
To watch the planets on their way,
With suns and systems, and to say :
 "Far back on earth I knew of this!"

The tablets of our memory
Will shine like plates of burnished steel ;
What now is lost, they will reveal,
 And what we know not, we shall see !

Yes, we on earth can fit the mind
For higher pleasures yet to come—
When through the worlds of space we roam,
 And ever-hidden wonders find.

Thus God has said, "Let there be light";
And what in earth's dark caves was made
The sooty carbon, has obeyed
 His voice, and is the diamond bright.

THE ISLAND LIFE.

Light—light is breaking out, and lo !
The problem now is solved ; for death,
That darkened cloud, as with one breath,
Is scattered !—and the rest, we know !

Then, courage for the field of strife !
The trumpet's call to arms we hear ,
Arouse ! awake ! oh, never fear
The conflict and the din of life !

CREED AND HOPE.

LORD, when, oh when shall we begin to see
Each particle of jangled, warring truth
Forever lost and reconciled in Thee?
Is not the other life perpetual youth
With mind unfolding, always sunned upon
By Him who lighted every sense even here?
Oh! wilt Thou not shine ever on, and on,
Till in our littleness we're brought so near
Thy free life-giving self, that every shell
Shall burst its bands and cerements and fly out
Into Thy infinite sea-room where no spell
Palsied with death shall seize upon the doubt
Of him who would believe and know! Oh, free
Our wearied minds, dear Lord, at last in Thee.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

LONG ago, in solemn midnight,
Shepherds watched upon the plain
When a band of holy angels
Sang the earliest Christmas strain.

Chorus.

Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !
Glory be to God on high !

Gently flowed the silent waters
In the stillness of the night,
And the glittering stars in heaven
Shone with pure and silvery light.

Chorus.

Heaven is opened, all its glory
Bursts across the eastern sky,
For the harmony of seraphs
Tells that Christ, the Lord, is nigh.

Chorus.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Now the golden gates are open,
Enter ye, who love the Lord ;
For the Saviour's love hath triumphed,
As He promised in His Word.

Chorus.

Join the angels in their chorus,
Praise the Lord, who came to die ;
Praises, in the highest, praises ;
Glory be to God on high !

Chorus.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

WHO is this in Bethlehem's town,
Brings the holy angels down—
Shepherds too, and wise men bow,
Son of God, 'tis Thou ! 'tis Thou !

In the temple, who is He,
Aged Simeon longs to see ?
Happy saint, he pays his vow,
Son of God, 'tis Thou ! 'tis Thou !

Who is He in yonder cot,
Bending to His toilesome lot,
Veiled in flesh we know Thee now,
Son of man, 'tis Thou ! 'tis Thou !

Sing we then with heart and voice,
While the sons of men rejoice,
While heaven's glory crowns Thy brow,
Son of God, 'tis Thou ! 'tis Thou !

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Hail the Saviour, praise Him then,
Heaven's own richest gift to men,
Son of God—of man, 'tis Thou
We would ever praise as now.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELE-
MACHUS.

NOTE.

THE abolition of the gladiatorial shows at Rome, against which Christian teachers had long inveighed and pleaded in vain, is referred to the reign of Honorius (A.D. 395-423). . . . When the Emperor, after the victory of Pollentia, was celebrating a triumph with games of this kind, Telemachus, an Eastern monk, who had made a journey to Rome for the purpose of protesting against them, leaped into the arena and attempted to separate the combatants, but was stoned to death by the spectators, who were enraged at this interference with their amusement. The Emperor acknowledged that such a death deserved the honors of martyrdom, and, with the willing acquiescence of his people, whose fury had soon given way to repentance, he abolished the inhuman spectacles.—*Robertson's History of the Christian Church, Book III. Chap. I.*

ST. TELEMACHUS.

ARGUMENT.

TELEMACHUS, an Asiatic monk, hearing of the cruelty of the gladiatorial games in the Coliseum at Rome, starts from his home in the East to utter his protest against these inhuman exhibitions. He meets with an Egyptian soothsayer and a fire-worshipping prophet, who, together with a Christian priest, urge him against the rashness of such an act. Undismayed by their words, he travels on, over Syrian plains and the region of Asia Minor, until he comes in sight of the city on the Seven Hills. As he wanders along the Appian Way, the shouts of the thousands in the Coliseum greet his ears. Entering within the doors and beholding the combat of the gladiators, he throws himself between them, and in the name of God protests, in the presence of the Emperor Honorius,

ST. TELEMACHUS.

against these barbarous games. The saint is stricken down by the soldiers—and dies upon the sod of the amphitheatre.

The Emperor Honorius, however, was so impressed by the apparition of the saint and his sacrifice, that he issued an order forbidding any further exhibitions, and from that day the gladiatorial games ceased in Rome.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ST. TELEMACHUS—An Asiatic Monk.

EGYPTIAN PRIEST.

FIRE-WORSHIPPER—A Prophet of Zoroaster.

CHRISTIAN PRIEST.

ROMAN GLADIATORS.

CHORUS OF ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

I.

EGYPTIAN PRIEST.

1.

GRAND but rash is thy vow—
Futile and vain is thy prayer,
For the rulers of Rome to the masses bow,
And thy hope will fade in despair.

2.

For the ages move on, and on,
In the ruts of the days that have been,
Like the Sphinx upon whom the sun hath shone,
And the rain and the storm have seen.

3.

Yet man can drudge, and can dream,
Can hope, and can struggle, and pray—
But the forces of life move down a stream
That eddies his strivings away.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

4.

'Tis all but a dream, we know—
The faith and the visions of men,
Osiris moves on like Orion's bow,
And Isis fades out from our ken.

5.

We priests of the people are vain,
And feed on the empty air ;
But the crowds must believe, and belief is gain—
And the gods are made by prayer.

6.

Then turn from thy foolish aim,
Call back thy purpose so frail :
Let thy feet stand firm, respect thy fame,
And cease thy sorrowful tale !

II.

ST. TELEMACHUS.

I.

Oh ! never shall I heed thy words,
Thou priest of Darkness, Fear and Hate ;
Thou shepherd of ignoble herds,
Whose faith is flawed by fickle fate.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

2.

What matter if I struggle on,
Before a wilful world alone?
My cross I bear, and know the dawn
Will bring me to the victor's throne.

3.

In vain thou temptest me to yield—
In vain my path with doubts dost fill
I never will renounce a field
My Master bids me conquer still.

4.

Sustained by faith I pass my days;
I glory most where others dread—
My voice for God in Rome I'll raise
Between the living and the dead.

5.

Sustain me, oh my God! that I
A witness for Thy truth may be—
Calm Thou my soul—nor let me die
Before Thou hast made use of me!

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

6.

Then perish all thy feeble scorn,
Thou hireling priest of Egypt's grave—
And know that faith from God is born
In human souls the world to save.

III.

PERSIAN FIRE-WORSHIPPER.

I.

Cease, rebellious man—
Nor strive to do God's part in God's own world !
From holy heights, for thwarting Nature's plan,
Were not proud angels hurled ?

2.

Darkness and light by turn
Reign in the kingdom of the silent sky ;
Wilt thou then not the simple lesson learn
Which daily meets thy eye ?

3.

God is our light and sun,
He shineth on the world that He hath made,
And yet the light and darkness both are one,
And God is not dismayed

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

4.

At that which He hath done :
He will bring light from darkness in His day ;
Wherefor should'st thou then undertake to play
The part of the bright sun ?

5.

Oh stay thy restless hand !
And leave to God His own events and ways ;
Strive not with thy frail purpose to withstand,
Him, whom the angels praise.

6.

Turn thou to mortal's work,
Nor seek to know the Master's will where naught
Of truth is given : let not thy spirit lurk
Round God's unwritten thought.

IV.

ST. TELEMACHUS.

I.

I dare not let my soul sink down
And hide beneath each starting tear,
I dare not crouch at Nature's frown,
And lose my freedom in my fear.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

2.

God's wheeling stars in space I see ;
His voice I feel in every breath,
I bow me to the Deity—
Whose soul I feel in life and death.

3.

I will not screen my wayward soul
Behind the words and talk of men :
Unloose my soul, O God ! and roll
Thy visions on my spirit's ken !

4.

Thy wisdom, and thy sophist's plea
Will not avail to stop the cry
God utters, when His children see
His image rudely doomed to die,

5.

To make a Roman holiday !
Into this blood-stained, cruel den,
So help me God, I'll force my way,
If not by life, by dying then.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

V.

CHRISTIAN PRIEST.

I. .

Thy faith is grand,
Telemachus ! who can withstand
Such words as these ? 'Twere well indeed
If more took heed—

2.

To Christ's command.
Yet zeal like thine, the church would land,
In wild confusion. We must bend
Hearts to our end.

3.

The age of law
Rules now, and men perceive with awe,
That where by miracle God moved,
His power He proved

4.

No more by sign
And wonder in the field or sky,
Than now, He shows His presence near
In souls that hear

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

5.

His word to-day—
In the plain reason of the way
Of daily life. Then cease, dear friend,
Thy fatal end.

6.

Return, return
To simpler living. Do not burn
Thy light out, ere it sends a ray
Christward, I pray.

VI.

ST. TELEMACHUS.

I.

Thrice tempted—torn by men, and tried,
I turn me from these lower ills,
And with God's angel by my side
I look to the Eternal Hills.

2.

'Tis futile all—'tis all in vain—
Such pleasing words of Sophists wise,
Serene my soul, in joy or pain,
Shall rise above their winning lies.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

3.

God is—and He is real to me ;
His voice has spoken, I believe ;
I trust Him where I cannot see ;
He guides, and He cannot deceive.

4.

Hereafter it may be that I
Shall know the meaning of my faith,
When with victorious ones on high,
I sing my triumph after death.

5.

Then courage for the hour of strife,
The Master's call 'tis mine to hear ;
Gird up thy loins, my soul, for life
Is won by faith and not by fear.

6.

I travel on o'er plain and flood,
O'er mountain snows and stormy seas,
No power shall hold me back—my blood
If not my voice shall make for peace.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

VII.

1.

And the Saint of God moved on,
 Heard the Tempter flee away—
Saw the westerling sun each dawn
 Shine upon a new-born day,
While his fervent feet kept moving—
 Towards the Tiber, leagues away.

2.

Greece he passed, where Plato taught,
 Athens, where St. Paul had stood ;
Towns and villages were fraught
 With remembered deeds of good ;
Yet there was no time to linger,
 Even if the martyr would.

3.

All was passed of Egypt's day,—
 Asia, Italy, and Greece,—
Though the cities whispered “stay,”
 Though the Tempter murmured “cease,”—
Northward towards the dread arena,
 Moved this messenger of peace.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

4.

And at last the city shone
 In the sunlight o'er the plain :
Turrets piled on towers of stone,
 Domes and minarets again,
Seemed to brighten in the gloaming,
 And a whisper came—" 'Tis vain."

5.

But the pressing feet moved on,
 And the earnest will supreme,
Like a king upon his throne,
 Held aloft the sacred dream
Till within the Coliseum
 Rose to God the dying scream.

6.

And the Saint of God beheld
 Thousands gazing at the strife,
While the angry butchers felled
 By the sword-thrust, quivering life;
And one prayer to God he uttered,
 Ere he joined the bitter strife.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

VIII

CHORUS OF GLADIATORS.

Hail to Thee, Cæsar Supreme ! The victors and
vanquished salute Thee.
Ruler of monarchs and men, from thy firm and
inviolate Throne,
Look down on the dusty arena—behold, ere the
moment of struggle,
The shout of the swordsmen released, the dead
and the dying's last moan.
For Thee 'tis a moment's surprise 'mid the lan-
guid employment of living,
Ere the feast or the play or the dance, breaks in
on the fetes of the Hall :
But for us 'tis the business of life, snatched out
from the pangs of the dying,
A struggle—a flash of the steel—a sword-thrust—
a triumph—a fall !
Draped for the altar of death, like the bullock led
on to the slaughter,
Towards Proserpine's kingdom we move. 'Then
shout for the moment of Fate :

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

Let us raise to the skies our last song, ere the signal is given for combat,
Hail to Thee, Cæsar Supreme! — as we stand before Pluto's dark gate.

IX.

GLADIATOR'S SONG.

I.

Ho! men of flesh, be strong
To hack and hew and flail;
Come to your work with song,
Nor shirk the bloody trail.
Your swords unsheathe,
Prepare to breathe
The fog of death—nor quail!

2.

Forget your happy past,
Think of your homes no more,
Wait for the signal's blast,
Then fasten Pity's door.
With foe or friend
Make death your end,
And fall to rise no more.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

3.

See! yonder waves the sign.
Hark! 'tis the trumpet's tone.
Forth to the bloody line!
Ten thousand hearts of stone,
With eager eye—
To watch us die—
Are calmly looking on!

X.

1.

And the Saint of God rushed in,
Seized the slayers 'mid the slain:
"Shame," he cried, "and burning sin!
God in judgment comes again;
Surely He your sins will visit
When He comes on earth to reign."

2.

Wild the cries and shouts arose,
From the multitude within—
Hands turned down—a sea of foes
Shrieked their curses 'mid the din;
And the haughty Cæsar nodded,
Mighty Ruler cased in sin.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

3.

Quick the black-hued swordsmen turned,
Towards the saint in snowy white ;
Swarthy limbed, the wrestlers spurned
Any rescue from the fight,
Save the freedom of the victor—
Conqueror only by his might.

4.

Flashed their swords in fiery wrath ;
Stones they seized—the victim bled ;
Angry voices in his path,
Angry footsteps towards him sped.
In a moment all was over :
On the sod the saint lay dead.

5.

Dead in Rome ! His vision ended.
Dead in Rome ! His work was done:
Towards his cross his way he wended ;
He had died—yet he had won !
Never more the sword of slaughter
Flashed athwart the glancing sun.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

XI.

CHORUS OF CHRISTIANS.

I.

Such was the Saint and such his vision clear
Of Life Eternal seen through life in Time,
His high ideal held 'mid doubt and fear,
Tells its own story fashioned into rhyme,

2.

Follow the dead ! The motive of his life
Shall give him precedence in realms of day ;
Firm with a purpose, out of earthly strife
His soul is journeying on its heavenward way.

3.

Enter the way of God ! His loving hand
Leads all His saints. He gives them of His
power

Whene'er He calls them. Nothing can withstand
The strength which holds them in the dying hour

4.

Leave thou the world ! Its maxims and its gains
Lead to destruction ! Gird thyself ; be strong ;
Endure, believe, strive on. These human pains
Shall issue in the seraph's burst of song.

THE LEGEND OF ST. TELEMACHUS.

5.

Choose your reward ! The worldling's joy is thine
If to the world you yield your fluttering heart.
Choose your reward ! A joy and power divine
Are his, who chooseth well the better part.

6.

Farewell, thou Saint of God ! Thy work is done.
Rest thou forever in God's light on high.
Thou in thy Master's name the palm hast won,
And thou shalt live, since thou hast dared to die.

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

A VISION ON EASTER EVEN.

"He descended into the place of departed spirits; the third day He rose from the dead."—*APOSTLES' CREED.*

I.

THE COMING.

HE cometh! Lo, He cometh!
From earth His Spirit flies;
The dead Christ laid in Joseph's tomb
Is nearing Paradise.
See! on the far horizon,
Upborne on angel's wing,
Ten thousand souls redeemed and saved
Are crowding round their King!

He cometh! Lo, He cometh!
The darkness now is passed—
And we who cried, How long, O Lord,
Shall see His face at last;

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

The saint, the sage, the prophet,
Who saw by faith's pure ray
This far-off hour of final joy,
Shall greet their Lord to-day.

Behold the Bridegroom cometh !
Hark to the deafening psalm !
With chorus notes, with victor crowns,
With amaranth and palm,
The souls redeemed in Paradise
Are hurrying on their way ;
Oh ! go ye out to meet Him,
And greet your Lord to-day.

II.

RECITATIVE.

'Twas Michael, the valiant archangel, servant of
God for His people,
Prince of the Host of the Lord, who thus to a
group in the meadow
Spoke of this day of deliverance, and told of the
coming of Jesus,

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE

Pausing to rest for a space, as he stood by the
banks of the river,—
The River of Water of Life,—and pointed the way
towards the sun-gate,
Bathed in a golden light, while the purple shades
of the mountains,
Touched with its crests of fire, flared beacons of
welcome and worship.

Out on the Highway of Peace, which led towards
the arch of the sun-gate,
The pathway which spirits redeemed trod as they
came from Earth's darkness,
Angels and children and seraphs, with the spirits
of just men made perfect,
Flocked round the triumphing Christ, and wel-
comed Him King in His beauty ;
Welcomed Him God and yet human, Saviour and
King of Immortals,
Brother and Helper of Man, Herald and Son of
the Father,
Welcomed Him Hope of the Ages, Seal of the cer-
tain hereafter.

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

III.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Thou hast come to Thy kingdom and glory,
Thy redeemed have been waiting for Thee ;
We have heard of the terrible story,
How Thy hands have been nailed to the tree ;
We have heard of Gethsemane's sorrow,
How an angel supported Thee there,
And the gloom which our spirits would borrow
Grows bright by the answer to prayer.
Thou art welcome, O Saviour of mortals,
All hail to Thy coming again !
Thou hast passed the dark dread of death's portals,
Thou hast opened Thy kingdom to men.
The grave could no longer confine Thee,
For death has been robbed of his power,
Nor the spirits in Limbo malign Thee,
For darkness rules not this blest hour.
Ride on ! while Thy prophets and sages
Pour out their glad anthems before Thee ;
Ride on ! while the souls of all ages
In lowliness bend to adore Thee ;

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

Let the sword of Thy triumph attend Thee:
Let meekness and righteousness own,
While legions of angels defend Thee,
Their King coming back to His throne !

IV.

RECITATIVE.

Then I saw in my dream, as they passed
The cleft in the rock where I stood,
Eager that form to behold,
Scanning its features to see
Saviour and Master in one,
Borne home by the angels of God—
The face of the Saviour of men !

From the sighs of the place of a skull,
From the shadows which creep round the tomb,
From the doubt and the terror of death,
From the gloom and the fear of the grave,
That face, all serene in its light,
That form, all divine in its power,
Had burst from the shell of decay,
Had come to its God and its home,
As the bead in the moss-covered dell

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

Breathes, sparkles, ascends, and is gone ;
As the sun in the cloud-banks of fog
Shines on through the shades of the mist,
And in shining mounts up through the gloom.

As once unto men it was given,
That face all resplendent with light
On the mountain of rapture to see,
While the prophets of law and of fire
As hostages came to the scene,
And the voice of the Father was heard ;
So now in this vision of faith
The face of the Master I saw,
Serene, yet transfigured with joy,
Majestic, yet peaceful, at rest—
Rejoicing and blessed and calm !

While thus on these faces I gazed,
And dreaded the heart-beats of Time,
Lest the vision should fade on my sight,
A group by the wayside I saw—
The prophets of God, who their song
To Jesus the Conqueror raised.

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

V.

CHORUS OF CHRISTIAN PROPHETS.

In the niches of time we have stood
 Bearing our witness to Thee ;
We have sealed our belief with our blood,
 Thy face, O our Master, to see ;
We have spoken, while men in derision
 Have scoffed in a wild despair ;
We have heeded the heavenly vision
 With the spirit of humble prayer ;
We have answered the voices from heaven,
 God's message we've dared to tell ;
We have scattered that holy leaven
 Which has saved a world from hell.

God's workmen in travail and sorrow,
 God's miners, who dig for the ore,
We have lived in the sure to-morrow,
 Our souls have been weary and sore.
In our hearts was a pure desire,
 In our minds was foreknowledge of death,
We have handled that sacred fire
 Which has lived with our dying breath.

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

Time was the space for our tears,
Strength was the gift of life's span,
Existence a burden of years—
But our field was the spirit of man.

And now, in the Autumn's gleaning,
No longer the spirit grieves,
For the reaper the sower's meaning
Learns 'mid the golden sheaves.
Thy presence, O Christ, adorning,
Our palms at Thy feet we lay,
The dew of Thy birth is the morning
Of everlasting day.

VI.

RECITATIVE.

It was then I heard hurrying feet, and lo ! Michael
my guide stood before me,
Leading some awe-stricken sages, who halted and
stood by the wayside.
Taking the hand of the foremost and leading him
straightway to Jesus,
The mailed archangel thus spake, as he screened
his strong eyes in the sunlight :

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

“These, too, are Thy children, O Master—Thy
followers, O Christ, in the twilight;
Never of Thee have they heard, save the voice
which has sounded within them;
Never Thy face have they seen, save the light
which doth lighten the human;
Never Thy hands have they clasped, save the
grasp of their souls on the conscience—
Therefore to them it is given—now, O blest King,
to behold Thee,
Bless them, O Jesus, our Master—Thy children
who own Thee and love Thee.
Following the light which was in them, never mis-
led by the darkness.”

VII.

CHORUS OF HEATHEN SAGES.

Lord and Master, we are Thine,
We are human—Thou divine,
Yet for Thee the soul doth pine.

In the darkness we have heard
Voices from Thy Holy Word,
Thou our spirits' depths hast stirred.

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

Deep must ever call to deep,
Conscience cannot always sleep,
We the truth of God would keep.

In God's image we are made,
With His lineaments arrayed,
God within us is obeyed.

Thou hast spoken to our need,
Blessed they who have believed—
Seeing not, yet undeceived.

Saviour Thou of souls unknown,
When Thou comest to Thy throne,
Place us—place us—near Thine own !

VIII.

RECITATIVE.

But hark ! is it children I hear
Shouting their carols of joy ?
'Mid the hosts of God's angels and saints,
Sages and prophets of old,

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE

Their voices break in on my ear,
The voices of childhood confessed,
Fresh in their fulness of song,
Resonant, tender and pure.
'Tis the utterance of childhood I hear,
'Tis the voice of the little ones saved,
Whose angels forever in light
The face of the Father behold!
Then plucking up courage, I said
To the guide who stood close by my side,
" The meaning of this would I know,
What children in glory are these?"
And Michael, my leader, replied—
"'Tis the welcome to Christ in His power,
Of those who His passion have shared—
The martyrs who slain in the night,
Suffered the sword-thrusts of him
Who Bethlehem's town filled with woe,
While Rachel in mourning refused
That comfort which comes not with years,
As she wept o'er her innocents slain."

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

IX.

CHORUS OF HOLY INNOCENTS.

Thou art welcome—oh, how welcome ;
Thou the world's expectant King :
Early would we go to greet Thee,
Early songs of welcome sing.
To the crowns of Thy rejoicing
We would add a martyr's gem ;
We who died that we might save Thee
On the plains of Bethlehem,

By the cruel sword of Herod
Ere we passed life's threshold o'er,
Like the fragrant early blossom
Seen and felt but found no more,—
For a moment in the gloaming
Living—uttering but a cry,
We have done our sacred errand—
Died, that Jesus might not die.

Others may have lived and suffered,
Others may have preached Thy word ;
Some in kingly state and purple
May proclaim Thee Christ their Lord ;

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

We have lived that we might spare Thee
To redeem a world from loss ;
We have died that we might bear Thee
Fellowship upon Thy cross.

X.

CONCLUSION.

I raised my head for a moment, the organ notes
were low,
There were chords which stirred my spirit as I felt
the steady flow
Of the thoughts which had overcome me with an
impulse strong and deep,
As, kneeling beside the column, I had fallen a
moment to sleep.
I had thought of the tomb in the garden, so empty,
forsaken, and bare :
I had heard the closing anthem, and had knelt for
the final prayer :
It must have been in a moment, Heaven opened
on my ken,
For I saw this glimpse of Paradise, ere we chanted
the last Amen.

THE WELCOME OF CHRIST TO PARADISE.

Out from the holy silence of these forty days of
prayer

My feet pressed on with the surging crowd in the
busy thoroughfare,

Back to the weary, dreary world, with its cares
and toils I came,

But my heart I had left at the altar rail, enshrined
with the Master's name.

But never can I forget the glimpse of that life that
is to be,

Which came to my soul in that organ strain, while
I felt what I could not see.

And through all my life my faith grows strong as I
come to Easter Even,

And think of the vision, which God vouchsafed,
of the welcome of Christ to Heaven.

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN—HE
FOUND HIS VICTIM, AND WAS
FORGIVEN.

*AN INCIDENT OF THE GREAT REFORMA-
TION OF THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO—
THE REVELATION OR DREAM OF A VEN-
ERABLE SHAKER.*

“**H**OW dark it is ! Is this my just reward ?
I who for love of God my careworn life
Have hazarded, and for the Christian faith
Through all these carking anxious years have
fought ?
Have I not served Thee, O my God, by night
In prayer, and through the tedious long-drawn day
In zealous offices : while all the world
Has turned to error, or in pleasure’s paths
Hast wandered, led by Satan’s magic wand,
And unto evil deeds its hands hath stretched
The while in prayer my soul has wrestled oft ?
Behold ! and see, my God, if aught of self
My soul hath spared ! Much in these troublous
days

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

My mind hath wrought, and lo ! through many a
year

Of pain and suffering, still, for Thee, O God,
My life's work witnesseth ! Is it not said
That but for Calvin's Institutes, the faith itself
Had perished ? Very zealous have I been,
O Lord of Hosts, for Thee, and now at last
When in the spirit world my eyes awake,
'Tis Heaven about me nowhere ! Can it be
That this is Hell—and I am reprobate ! ”
Thus mourned this stalwart hero of the faith
Who by Geneva's placid waters walked
And ruled with iron-rod that Commonwealth
Nestling by Juras' mountains, where the stern
Mont Blanc in towering pride her sun-lit head
Lifts heavenward; 'mid the city's bustling streets
All did him reverence, as the peaks around
The snow-crowned monarch cast their glory first
Upon the massive mountains when the sun
Sinks daily westward ! Wherefore then this strange
And solitary exile, far removed
From Earth, and Heaven, and Hell, from fellow-
men
Redeemed and justified, from spirits blest

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

And from his God ! While thus the pilgrim mused
A flying Seraph passed on beating wing—
And hovering o'er the lonely spirit sang:

“ Listen, Child of Time and Earth !
’Tis the morning of thy birth,
Now thy days on Earth are past
Thou art come to God at last
All thy pilgrim hours are ended—
Into Deity are blended
Hopes and strivings of the years,
Doubts and fears and bitter tears !
Yet upon thy darkened soul,
Lo ! the clouds of judgment roll;
Thou hast served with strength of mind
God thy Father just and kind.
Yet this lesson thou must know,
That if thou would’st Hell forego,
Love alone can bring thee home
Where no doubt or fear can come:
Thou must learn in realms above
God is mercy—God is love ! ”

Thus spake the angel; and on upraised wing
Passed on its way, bound outward, as some ship,

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

The Harbor's lighthouse rounding, moves away,
Its canvas big with breezes, to the deep
And soon in the abyss is lost ! For these
God's ministering spirits are, and flames
Of fire are His angels ! Now they post
From island world to island, in the vast
Sequence of planets ! Creature-like they sing
As once the morning stars rejoiced, while all
The Sons of God shouted for joy !

“ Alone

Once more am I ! ” exclaimed the exile soul,
As in the ether blue before his eyes
The angel vanished. “ On Hell's confines drear
Cast forth from God on this lone point of space
I linger ! Dark it is ! and chill ! And this
My crown of merit is ! I whom the elect
On earth rejoice in ! Calvin's name 'twas said
Would shine even as the stars forever ! Lamb
Of God, have mercy ! Mercy on my soul,
And grant me, Lord, Thy peace, that I may come
To Thee my God at last ! ”

This prayer in Heaven

Was heard ! And lo ! a light celestial dawned,
And saints and angels on their upward way

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

Were seen, all thronging toward some central
point

In realms as yet invisible. And now
The outcast spirit strengthened in his will
Perceived this motion Heavenward. Gladly then
This concourse, joyous, hymning praises, he
Joined, and moved outward toward the far-off
light !

Onward the great procession moved and stood
Before a rim of golden ether (this
The eternal throne of God omnipotent);
While from within, angelic songs were heard
Of souls redeemed and glorified, who sang:

“ Nothing that maketh a lie,
Nothing that speaketh of hate,
Nothing of sense or of time
Entereth into the light !
Gone is the vengeance of man,
Lost are the weapons of scorn,
Peace and eternal good-will,
Love as the rule of the life,
Tenderness, sweetness, and joy,
These are the things that shall last,
These shall abide to the end ! ”

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

Then from the inner hosts of spirits bright
A mailed angel issued, strong and brave,
Like to King Arthur, as in bronze he stands
Within the ancient church at Innsbruck, where
Onward there rolls through Tyrol heights the
“Inn”

Toward sunny Italy. Then by the hand
Gently the suppliant touching, he, in tones
Of love unutterable, and with voice
Christ-like, in deep compassion spoke:

“Dark on thy soul is a stain, it weighs like a ponderous anchor,
Dragging thee down to the depths, shutting thee
out from the light !

Never can peace be thy guest or the blessing of
heaven thy portion

Till in some far distant world falls from thy spirit
this blot.

Vengeance is mine saith the Lord, I will repay
saith the Master.

Judgment and cruelest scorn thou on thy brother hast paid !

Thou to the heated tribunal an innocent mortal
has summoned,

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

Thou with the faggot and chain the life of a
brother hast robbed.
Thousands looked on at the sight, and scholars
were glad to applaud thee,
When by the clear placid lake the flames of thy
victim rose high.
The blood-drops of Michael Servetus, the pain
and the horrible anguish
Call to the Lord of Sabáoth, rise up in judgment
on thee.
Never canst thou to the Light, never to love and
to mercy,
Venture to come unforgiven, venture the Father
to see.
Fly to the uttermost corner, seek the remotest
star distant,
Follow the leadings of light—follow and struggle
and pray.
Wrestle with space and with distance, never aban-
don thy purpose,
Till in some far shining sphere the face of your
victim you see.
Fall at his feet interceding—begging forgiveness
and pity,

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

Asking for pardon and love, pleading the cross of
your Lord.

I am thy brother and helper—Michael am I, the
archangel,

Come! for thy errand is mine, I for thy pardon
am sent!"

—He ceased

And on John Calvin's troubled face there fell
A tear, outside of heaven, an angel's tear
For this strong soul in prison; long he knelt
For strength and mercy pleading, ere he rose
This boundless flight to take, and him to meet
Whom last amid the faggot's flames he saw.

• • • • • • • •

Days, weeks, and months, as men count years,
rolled by,

While yet these wanderers journeyed ever on,
Like Dante led by Virgil on their round
Circuitous through the Inferno. Then,
Upon a day when angels bright in Heaven
Sang of God's mercy to the planet Earth
And of good-will to men, amid a throng
Of earnest spirits luminous with light
And deep in works of love for souls condemned,

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

The archangel guide exclaimed, "Behold, 'tis he,
Michael Servetus named; give God the praise!"
At this the penitent in tears suffused
Cried out, as on his willing knees he fell:
"Forgive me, O my brother! thou who once
All out of zeal for God, I to the stake
Didst sentence! Not for love of man it was,
Nor yet for fear of Devil, I this curse
Upon my darkened soul didst lay, whereby
Until from Thee forgiveness first is had,
Forever from the face of God, from Heaven,
From spirits blest, from saints and men redeemed,
Yea, from that blessed number called the elect,
Of which through zeal myself I deemed the chief,
Am I shut out! Give ear, O brother man,
And hear my pleading! Mercy on thy Judge
Do thou bestow, for what is bound on Earth
Is bound in Heaven, and I in error's chain
Am fast a prisoner!"

Then Servetus said,
"This is the day of blessedness and peace,
When once the angels sang good-will to men
And glory in the highest Heaven to God.
The angels sing it every new-born year

THE VISION OF JOHN CALVIN.

When fields with snow are white, and gladness
reigns

On Earth supreme, and children's hearts have men
And love is crowned as monarch over all.
The heart of God is wonderful; His love
Conquers all discords, and His pitying eye
Sees hope and restoration where mankind
Views only failure! Ruins deep by him
Are changed to new creations, and beyond
The bounds of law about His creatures' life
There flows this vast illimitable sea,
This ocean, this unfathomable deep
Forever full and flowing ever free!
All things to love bow down; in Heaven above
And on the Earth, and in the Depths beneath,
And Christmas-morn means Heaven!

Therefore I

Upon this festal day this gift bestow
Of sympathy in sorrow—as in joy!
Mine was the agony of body: thine
The greater load to bear, the anguish deep
Of spirit! Now 'tis past and gone!

Behold

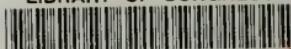
And see! Thou art forgiven. One are we

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In fellowship—'tis Christmas Day in Heaven!"

Then said the Archangel, "Now 'tis well indeed,
Come let us fly upon our journey home.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Heaven's gates stand open
wide!"

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